



BNOS MALKA ACADEMY

PARENT HANDBOOK

9/2023

אלול תשפ"ג

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MISSION STATEMENT

At Bnos Malka we recognize each child's individual strengths and therefore strive to create a safe and encouraging environment that is tailored to each student. To accomplish this, teachers and administrators provide structure and facilitate motivation, self-growth, lifelong learning, responsibility, and perseverance. Bnos Malka educators are always open to others' advice, opinions, and experiences, and we approach challenges with a growth mindset. We take an active role in fostering healthy, positive friendships, and peer interactions. Our actions reflect a belief in being passionate, nurturing, creative, and patient. At Bnos Malka we strive to create and foster an environment of effective communication, collaboration, positive thinking, preparedness, clear expectations, and professionalism. We are continually reflective about our spiritual growth and seek to grow in our Avodas Hashem. By doing so, we encourage students to be lifelong Torah learners and to serve Hashem with joy.

At Bnos Malka:

- We offer a comprehensive Torah-true education.
- Our teachers inspire Ahavas Torah and Yiras Shamayim.
- We provide a challenging and robust General Studies education in accordance with the New York State standards.
- On questions of Halacha, we accept the opinions of the Rabbinical Board of Torah Umesorah and the Vaad Harabonim of Queens.

SCHOOL HOURS

School begins when the bell rings at 8:10 AM. Classes end at 4:00 PM Monday through Thursday and 12:50 PM on Friday. *Our administration assumes no responsibility for students who arrive before 7:45 or are picked up after dismissal, unless special arrangements have been made.*

VISITORS TO BNOS MALKA

All visitors, including parents, must report to the school office. Parents are always welcome guests in our school. If it is necessary to see the principal or a member of our faculty, you must schedule an appointment in advance.

Our school is dedicated to working together with parents, teachers and students. Parents and visitors are welcome to make an appointment to observe our teaching-learning process in progress throughout the year. However, no one is permitted to enter a classroom or visit the areas of the building occupied by Bnos Malka without clearance from the administrative office.

All parents and visitors must adhere to our school-wide dress code: Men are required to wear yarmulkas and women are expected to dress in accordance with the halachos of tznius: Dresses/skirts must come below the knees, tops must cover collarbones, sleeves must cover elbows and care must be taken so that clothing is not tight or see-through. Shoes and socks must be worn. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

ATTENDANCE, ARRIVAL AND LATENESS, EARLY DISMISSALS AND BUS CHANGES

The importance of regular attendance cannot be overemphasized. Children who are absent, come late regularly or who leave early, fall behind in their own work and slow the progress of the class as a whole.

Getting to school on time is extremely important. If your child comes to school late for any reason, we request that, for the safety of the student, an adult accompany her to the school office. **Excessive lateness may lead to punitive measures such as parent conferences and reevaluation of the child's status as a student in our school.**

Children are required by law to attend school every day. When illness or an emergency occurs, a note from a parent explaining the absence is required before a child will be re-admitted to class. If a child is absent for more than two days, a call to the school should be made to report the cause of the absence and to arrange for missed school work to be made up. Middle school students are required to provide a doctor's note in order to be excused on the day of an exam. Absence without a doctor's note may result in a point deduction from the test grade.

Should the need arise for a student to leave school early, a parent must email or call the school beforehand, informing us what time the child will be picked up and by whom. You may not go straight to the classroom to pick up the student. Please come to the first floor office to sign out the student, and someone will gladly get your child for you.

The bus that your child is assigned to is the bus that she will be placed on. We cannot alter a child's regular routine without an email or phone call from a parent. In order to avoid miscommunication, we recommend that you make those changes as early as possible in the day and that you take the name of the person in the school with whom you have spoken. In the event of a bus change, the **parent must call the school by 2:45pm Monday through Thursday and before 11:45am on Fridays.**

We apologize that we cannot accept dismissal changes after 2:45pm.

7th and 8th graders who wish to walk home must have a letter from a parent **on file** that gives them permission to do so.

PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL

Having your daughter assemble personal effects and school belongings before she goes to sleep at night will result in a well-organized student who is fully prepared and ready to go to school the next morning. Seeing to it that homework assignments and school books are placed in a school bag or knapsack and assigning a particular area for safekeeping will help ensure that they are not forgotten at home. A checklist of certain important items may be helpful for those students who need a more structured approach.

NOURISHMENT IS IMPORTANT

For best performance during the school day, a nutritious breakfast is essential. A properly nourished child is a more alert and responsive student. There are two snack breaks during the day. When sending snacks to school, we recommend nutritious foods, such as fruits or vegetables, especially for the morning snack. All food sent to school must be strictly Kosher. The school accepts the following hechsherim: OU, OK, Chof-K, Star-K, CRC. Other hechsherim may not be acceptable and your child may not be allowed to eat the food. Please remind your child NOT to share food or snacks with her friends.

The universal acceptance of these kashrus supervisory agencies allows us to maintain a high standard for our school. If you have any concerns about the kashrus of a product, please do not hesitate to call us. **No home-baked products may be brought to school for parties or other school functions.**

Please inform the school if your daughter has some particular dietary needs, such as allergies, etc. **Bnos Malka is a nut and seed free school. Products containing traces of nuts or seeds should not be brought in for lunch, snacks, or parties.**

Please note: Students should bring a 20 oz. (or smaller) plastic water bottle to school each day. No coffee, tea, hot cocoa, etc. is allowed to be brought to school.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Bnos Malka offers, at additional cost, a school Hot Lunch Program for those who would like to participate. A menu is sent home each month. All dairy foods served as part of the school lunch program are Cholov Yisroel. If your child is a participating student and you know she will not enjoy or is allergic to a particular day's lunch, please send her prepared with an appropriate lunch for that day. **Please send fleishig on Monday and Wednesday and milchig on Tuesday and Thursday.** This way she will be able to partake of other items offered, and supplement what you have sent.

NON-PARTICIPATING GIRLS must bring appropriate lunches, i.e.- fleishig/milchig according to the fleishig/milchig days of the Hot Lunch Program menu. This will allow them to eat their lunch with their classmates rather than being seated separately.

There is no school lunch on Friday (except for the PKA and Pre-1A). Please make sure your child has a nutritious snack that she can eat to sustain her until dismissal at 1:00 pm. Please do not send bread or other Hamotzie items, as the break does not allow enough time for washing and bentching.

When sending snacks with your daughter, please keep in mind that Monday and Wednesday are fleishig days; do not send milchig snacks for those afternoons.

Please remind your child NOT to share food or snacks with her friends.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Birthday parties in school are only permitted in the PKA and the Pre-1A and must be coordinated in advance with the classroom teacher. Students in 1st-8th grade may bring in **pareve, store-bought cupcakes** to distribute during recess after coordinating directly with the classroom teacher. Only nut- and seed-free cupcakes are allowed. **If any other food items or party bags are brought in to school, they will not be distributed.**

The following guidelines are to be followed when planning parties outside of school: The entire class must be invited to the party. Including the entire class will help your daughter develop a sensitivity and social understanding of other people's feelings. A child not included in a class activity could be hurt very deeply.

We encourage the children to extend their social relationships developed at school to after-school activities. With this in mind, we remind parents that foods, snacks, etc. served in your home **MUST** conform to our school's standards so that the children can comfortably participate and celebrate with their classmates.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices to school. The following is a list of some items that are not allowed:

- Cell phones
- iPods
- iPads
- MP3 Players
- Cameras
- Portable DVD players
- Electronic games
- Smart watches

Any such items seen in school will be confiscated and returned to the parent after a mandatory meeting with the administration.

For Bnos Malka's full policy regarding ownership and usage of technological devices outside of school, please refer to our "Internet and Technology Policy" on our website.

BNOS MALKA APPEARANCE: DRESSCODE

Although Yiddishkeit places prime significance on sincerity of the heart and deed, it has also underscored the importance of proper physical appearance and dress. The Tzelem Elokim, the G-dly image, should be reflected from within and on the outside, in one totality, by all those at Bnos Malka. Our clothing and demeanor should reflect Tznius and good taste.

Proper dress, grooming and behavior set the tone for a successful school career. At Bnos Malka, a school uniform has been established for all girls beginning in Grade 1. **In addition, no nail polish, fake nails, large or multiple earrings, hair dye, hair beads or makeup may be worn by our students.** Additionally, for safety purposes, no open-toe or open-heel shoes (such as sandals, Crocs, etc.) or sneakers with wheels can be worn to school.

It is the responsibility of the parents to see to it that their children are dressed properly. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of any article of clothing. Parents are required to both cooperate with and demonstrate their support for the rules of our school.

OFFICIAL SCHOOL UNIFORM

Since our inception, Bnos Malka Academy has had a uniform which our girls have been required to wear in grades 1-8. The uniform consists of a gray pleated skirt, and a light blue or pink button-down shirt. For more details, contact the school office.

Preschool

Preschool students do not have a uniform. They should wear dresses or skirts that are at least knee-length, shirts that have sleeves, socks, and closed-toe shoes. **Pants are not allowed.**

Elementary School (Grades 1-4)

Students **MUST** have knees and ankles **fully covered**. Therefore, skirts must come below the knee, and students may choose to wear knee socks, stockings or ankle socks that **cover the entire ankle**. Leggings are not allowed to be worn to school.

Middle School (Grades 5-8)

Legs must be fully covered whether sitting or standing. Therefore, skirts must come **at least 2 inches below the knee when standing**. Students may choose to wear knee socks, tights, or stockings. **Leggings are not allowed to be worn to school**. Additionally, short socks on top of tights or stockings are not allowed.

All uniform skirts, shirts and sweatshirts must be purchased from Mrs. Ahuva Ginsberg (located in Queens: queensuniforms@yahoo.com) **or** from FRAYLICH (located in Brooklyn: 718-871-8253 or www.fraylichschooluniforms.com).

It is the responsibility of parents to see to it that their children conform to the uniform guidelines.

HOMEWORK

The homework policy of our school calls for limited daily assignments for all students in Grades Pre-1A and above. It is important for parents to take the necessary interest in providing the proper environment (quiet, comfortable and well-lit) for the child's prompt and regular follow-through on these assignments at home. Kindly take an interest in your child's homework. Supervise and check on the homework's quality and neatness. Do not allow your daughter to submit careless work. Rather, try to instill a sense of pride in the work your daughter produces.

If your daughter is experiencing difficulty in completing her homework, do not hesitate to reach out to her teacher.

Recommended reading on the above topic: "Homework without Tears," by Lee Canter.

TESTS/QUIZZES

Students are expected to take tests and quizzes on the day that they are being administered. Tests will only be administered on a different day if a student has an excused absence. If a student anticipates being out on the day of an exam, she or her parent should inform the teacher ahead of time and schedule an alternate date.

ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP WORK

If a student misses school, it is her responsibility to make up the work she missed and to speak to her teacher if she needs assistance.

SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION

In order to provide a reliable system of communication between school and home, memos, bulletins, and newsletters will be sent home with your daughter. Many notifications are sent out via email as well so we encourage you to make sure that you provide your email address to the school office. Please read them carefully and take note of their contents.

Parents and teachers are encouraged to speak with each other frequently, so that together we can provide for the needs of each child. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please e-mail her or leave a message in the school office. The teacher will return your call as soon as possible. Unless given specific permission to do so, parents should never call a teacher at home or text her cellphone. Open and direct communication is the best way to resolve a concern. Given that our teachers are dedicated to helping your child, we ask that when contacting a teacher regarding a complaint, you have a respectful conversation and understand that your child's perception may not take into account all of the factors involved.

To facilitate communication between parents and teachers, semi-annual conferences will be held during the school year. Please consult your calendar for this year's conference dates.

Divorced Parents: Unless we are in possession of custody papers stating otherwise, we must assume that both parents are entitled to and will be given access to all information regarding their child. This includes picking a child up from school, report cards and other relevant information. It is the parents' responsibility to provide the school with the necessary documentation.

Calling home from school: If your child is not feeling well during the school day, the office will contact you and discuss the options based on the circumstances. Students will NOT be allowed to call home to arrange playdates or study sessions for after school. These get-togethers must be arranged before the school day.

REPORT CARDS

The school year is divided into three marking periods with interim progress reports. Report cards will be issued at the end of each marking period. We will keep you well informed of your child's progress.

TEXTBOOKS AND WORKBOOKS

At Bnos Malka, we provide our students with the textbooks and workbooks they will need. These books are loaned to the students to use for the school year. They are the property of Bnos Malka Academy, and in other cases, the Department of Education. It is the responsibility of each student to maintain all books in good condition. Students are responsible for paying for lost or damaged books.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Bnos Malka has adopted the New York State mandated immunizations schedule and requires that all its students be immunized. Bnos Malka will exclude from classes and the school's premises any child/student not immunized as prescribed by said schedule; furthermore, the school reserves the right to expel any student who is not immunized on schedule, *without* refund of tuition payments made.

The only exception to our immunization policy is for those children who can provide a documented medical reason certified by a licensed medical professional.

KEEPING RECORDS UP TO DATE AND KEEPING HEALTHY

For the protection of our children, please help us keep records up to date. Please notify the office immediately of any changes in address, phone number, employment, etc.

We also ask that you make sure your child is in good health and in good physical condition before sending her to school.

Please notify the school immediately if your daughter has been in contact with a communicable illness, such as Covid, or head lice. Bnos Malka has a "NO NIT" policy and as such, no child will be allowed back into school unless she is 100% clean of lice and nits and has a clearance letter from one of our authorized lice checkers.

In the interest of keeping all of our students and staff healthy, Bnos Malka has a 24-hour rule for students with strep throat and with fever. **Students are not allowed back in school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours.** For strep throat, students need to be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school. According to New York State law, health records are required to be up-to-date for a child to be admitted to school.

MEDICATION

We give Tylenol to students, when deemed necessary by our staff, **ONLY** if you have indicated your permission for us to do so on your child's emergency form. We cannot take responsibility to hold and dispense any other medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter. If your child is on a regimen of any type of medication that cannot be taken outside of school hours, you must call the office to inform us of the situation and to work out a plan.

TRANSPORTATION

Yellow school buses are provided by the city to transport our students to and from school, provided you live within the distance allowed by the Department of Education. If your child is being transported by a yellow school bus, you will be notified regarding:

- Your Route number
- The time of pick up
- Location of pick up
- Location of drop off

At the end of the day (dismissal time) the children are picked up in front of the school. You will be informed of the days during the school year on which transportation is not available due to Department of Education and City holidays.

PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION

If you transport your child to school, it is your responsibility to have your child arrive at school on time, and be picked up on time.

8:00-8:10 AM	Arrival
3:50 PM	Dismissal (Monday through Thursday)
12:50 PM	Dismissal (Friday)

DISCIPLINE, CONDUCT, COURTESY AND MANNERS

Bnos Malka places great emphasis on personal development. We guide our girls' demeanor to reflect pleasantness and propriety, Middos and Derech Eretz. We pursue these goals by building a wholesome school and classroom environment.

Yet, human frailties are such that it may become necessary at times to discipline a youngster. This is done to instill proper guidance, or to underscore the significance of a specific concern. On such occasions, we expect parents to be fully understanding, cooperative, and supportive. Our staff is known for its professional expertise and commitment to children. Each teacher and administrator in our school deserves the confidence and trust of our parents. Wholesome and meaningful life lessons are conveyed to the child when parents support and reinforce the actions taken by the staff. Of course, when clarification is needed, you should feel free to contact our professional staff. They are always more than eager to discuss matters with you, though they do count on your courtesy, support and cooperation.

Discipline is a key component in a good education. Only with the proper attitude can a child be free to learn. When a child misbehaves in class, she not only interferes with her own learning, but the learning of her classmates as well. Children who demonstrate an inability to act properly will be held accountable for their actions, which could result in suspension from school and/or denial of enrollment for the subsequent semester.

We expect a student's conduct and her attitude towards adults and peers to be evidenced in her choice of language and manner of expression. We ask that parents guide and encourage their children to use the words 'please,' 'thank you,' etc. We ask for your assistance in training your daughters to properly greet their teachers and classmates in and out of school.

BEHAVIOR ON BUSES

All students are expected to behave appropriately on school buses. All students **MUST** be seated at all times that they are on the bus. Children who are out of their seats, disturbing the driver and/or other children, making noise, or doing anything deemed inappropriate by the driver will lose the privilege of school bus transportation.

We urge you to discuss the seriousness of these matters with your child.

SELLING/BUYING AT SCHOOL

Aside from the 8th grade fundraising committee, students are not allowed to sell food or other items during school hours. Merchandise that is being sold will be taken away by the administration.

TZEDAKAH

An important aspect of character training is the teaching of the concept of Tzedakah and sharing with others. Children are encouraged to bring Tzedakah on a regular basis.

FIRE DRILLS/SHELTER DRILLS

Fire Drills and Shelter Drills are conducted at regular intervals as required by law.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

At Bnos Malka, we encourage parent participation through membership in the Parents Association (PA), parent volunteer programs, and support of our many activities.

We recognize that the success of our programs depend upon the full cooperation and concern of our parents, the faculty and the administration.

CLASS TRIPS

During the course of the school year, class trips may be scheduled to enhance and enrich the children's education. Often the experience is necessary to help foster independence, environmental knowledge and responsibility. It is also important for children to know proper procedures within a group.

All trips are carefully planned for and are a **required component** of the school program. Parents wishing to have a child excused from a trip must consult with the principal well in advance of the trip day, and may still be required to pay for the trip.

PARENT PARTICIPATION ON CLASS TRIPS

We welcome the assistance of parents on class trips. However, siblings may not be brought on these trips.

All parent involvement and assistance is greatly appreciated by the Yeshiva.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Bnos Malka Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.